

REPORT
OF
THE SCHOOL-COMMITTEE
OF THE
TOWN OF LEXINGTON,
FOR THE YEAR
1846-1847.

PRESENTED APRIL 5, 1847: AND PRINTED BY VOTE OF
THE TOWN.

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REPORT.

THE General School Committee, in accordance with the requisitions of the laws of the Commonwealth, submit the following Report.

The two schools in the Centre District were kept, during the summer, by Miss Emily Johnson and Miss Mary H. Rust ;—the former in the grammar,—the latter in the primary,—department. During the winter, they were kept by Mr. Asa Wellington in the grammar,—and by Miss Elizabeth Mulliken in the primary,—department.

The two schools in the South-East District have, by means of private subscriptions within the district in addition to the appropriation of the town, been continued through the year, under the charge of the same teachers, Mr. James W. Putnam in the grammar department, and Miss Eleanor S. Adams in the primary.

The South school has been under charge of the same teacher, Miss Caroline Smith, during both the summer and winter terms.

The North school has been kept, during both summer and winter terms, by the same teacher, Miss Caroline Ball.

The West school was kept during the summer by Miss Mary W. Goss,—during the winter by Miss Mary Susan Rice.

The North-East school was kept during the summer by Miss Lucy A. Downing ;—during the winter by Mr. Charles Tidd.

The monthly wages given to our different teachers, together with the value of their board, is as follows.

TABULAR VIEW, NO. I.
TEACHERS' WAGES AND BOARD.

District	Wa.	Bd	District.	Wa.	Board
Centre Gram... Summer	\$20	\$8	South... Sum.	\$16	6,50
Winter	38	10	Winter	24	7
Primary... Summer	16	6	North... Sum.	19	6
Winter	16	6	Winter	19	6
S. East Gram... Summer	35	10	West... Sum.	16	6
Winter	40	10	Winter	24	8
Primary... Summer	14	8	N. East... Sum.	20	6
Winter	14	8	Winter	35	10

The number of weeks the several schools have been continued during the year is as follows.

TABULAR VIEW, NO. II.
DURATION OF THE SEVERAL SCHOOLS.

Districts.	Summer.	Winter.	Total.
Centre District	18 weeks	15½ weeks	33½ weeks
South East	25 weeks	15 weeks	40 weeks
South	20 weeks	18 weeks	38 weeks
North	24 weeks	18 weeks	42 weeks
West	20 weeks	19 weeks	39 weeks
North East	16 weeks	12 weeks	28 weeks

The whole number of scholars, together with the average attendance in each of the schools, has been as follows.

TABULAR VIEW, NO. III.
NO. OF SCHOLARS, AND AVERAGE ATTENDANCE.

Districts.	Whole Number.	Average Attendance.
Centre Grammar—Summer	58	53
Winter	62	48
Primary—Summer	54	47
Winter	50	43
South—Summer	38	30
Winter	46	40

Districts.	Whole No.	Av. Attend.
North—Summer	30	25
Winter	35	30
South East—Summer	59	50
Winter	72	64
Primary—Summer	52	46
Winter	52	45
West—Summer	33	23
Winter	39	30
North East—Summer	28	23
Winter	37	28

The number of scholars, pursuing the different branches of study in the several schools, has been as follows.

TABULAR VIEW, NO. IV.
NO. OF SCHOLARS IN THE DIFFERENT BRANCHES OF STUDY.

Districts.	Reading.	Orthograp.	Writing.	Eng. Gram.	Geography.	Arithmetic.	Algebra.	History.	Nat. Philos.	Mental Phi.	Astronomy.	Geometry.	Book keep'g.	Latin.	Book Nature
Centre, Sum.	58	58	58	56	58	58	6	8	4			15			
Winter	62	62	62	54	42	62	7	4	7	3		9		6	
Primary, Su.	54	54			34	38									
Winter	50	50	21		24	34									
S. East, Sum.	59	59	58	51	57	56	3	14		3					
Winter	72	72	70	58	46	70	3	14	2	3			6	1	
Primary, Su.	52	52	18		35	35									
Winter	52	52	26		21	40									
South, Sum.	38	38	20	13	14	28	3	12			3				
Winter	46	46	30	20	25	35	3	18				3	5		
North, Sum.	30	30	20	9	24	24									
Winter	35	35	20	13	24	30									
West, Sum.	33	33	21	14	18	25			5						
Winter	39	39	39	39	39	39			4			5		3	6
N. East Sum.	28	28	13		12	17									
Winter	37	37	30	7	24	29	2		5						

In regard to these Tabular views, your committee would remark that they must be considered as only approximations to perfect accuracy. There has been some want of care on the part of some of the teachers in filling out their registers. And consequently there has been some difficulty in ascertaining the precise state of the schools. It is desirable that hereafter these Registers may be more carefully filled out, in all the minute, as well as in the more important particulars embraced in them. To prevent neglect in this matter, the committee would state that "no teacher is entitled" by law "to receive any payment for his or her services, until the Register for his or her school, properly filled up and completed, shall be deposited with the school committee, or with such person as they may have appointed to receive it."

In regard to the maintenance of order in the several schools, the committee have inculcated the importance of prompt and cheerful obedience to all the rules and requisitions of the teacher, as absolutely essential to the best success of the school. But they have preferred to have this obedience secured, if possible, by mild measures; by enlisting the affections of the pupils, furnishing them with full employment for their time and their thoughts, and by leading them to act from the highest principles of moral rectitude. They have supposed that good order in school, resulting from the self-government of the pupils, based upon their affectionate regard for their teachers, their interest in their studies, and their conscientious devotion to all that is true and honorable and right, would be far more valuable in its permanent influence upon the characters of the pupils themselves, than the same order secured by the mere dread of physical suffering. But your committee have stated to the teachers, in the presence of their pupils, whenever it seemed necessary, that they would be sustained in the use

of all justifiable measures to secure obedience and preserve order. The committee have reason to believe that most of the teachers, employed during the year, have endeavored to govern upon the principles which have now been stated. And in most of the schools there has been a very commendable degree of order among the pupils. There have however been some violations of order, in the West school and in the grammar department of the South East school, to which the attention of the committee was directed, and of which they therefore feel themselves called upon to speak.

In the West school, during the winter term, one lad thirteen years of age, seemed disposed to disregard the authority of a female. The Committee, having been called upon, remonstrated with the lad kindly and affectionately. But, when they had done this, they assured him that he must obey or leave the school. He preferred the latter course, and took himself off, relieving the school of his evil influence and example, but depriving himself of most of his winter's schooling. Afterwards two other lads, of about the same age, were temporarily suspended by the teacher, and the committee were called upon to decide as to what should be done in regard to them. Before the arrival of the committee at the school, one of the lads had returned, apparently humbled, and the other, who was forbidden to return without making proper acknowledgements, soon left the district.

In the Grammar department of the South East school, or the school in the East Village, during the winter term, several of the largest scholars in school, young men in age and stature, and who, it was hoped, might have shown themselves young men in conduct and character, acting upon high and manly principles, and manifesting their just appreciation of the privileges they enjoyed by their faithful improvement of them, exhibited, from the first, a spirit of in-

subordination, caused their teacher much trouble, and prevented, in some degree, the best success of the school. The teacher pursued towards these young men a course of mild forbearance united with great firmness and decision, hoping to awaken within them some proper feelings, and secure their cheerful and affectionate obedience, without resort to severe measures. But it was in vain. During nearly the whole term they continued to occasion the teacher much trouble, and to exert a deleterious influence upon the school. At length, near the close of the school, the door of the school-room was fastened during the recess, to prevent the teacher leaving the room, while the smaller pupils were discouraged from unfastening the door and entering. Thus the teacher was openly insulted, and an example of insubordination was set before the whole school. The teacher suspended four of the largest scholars, as participators in this offence, and the committee were called upon to consider what should be done in regard to them. After due deliberation, the committee gave to those of the suspended scholars, who desired to be restored to the school, the liberty of returning upon the condition of their making a suitable acknowledgement before the school, for the insult which had been so publicly given. They declined making an acknowledgement, and the suspension of the teacher was confirmed by the committee, or rather changed to an expulsion from the school. Another scholar, afterwards suspended by the teacher, was permitted to return to the school upon his making an acknowledgement of his own participation in the offence. It is always unpleasant to cut off any from the privileges of our schools. And the more especially because, in so doing, it is more often than otherwise the case, that those are removed, who stand most in need of the discipline and instructions of the school. And perhaps if these disobedient and troublesome pupils had been taken in hand earlier

in the winter, it might have been well to have reduced them to subjection by the infliction of severe punishment. But the committee fully approve of the course of the teacher, acting as he did in accordance with the views of the prudential committee man, by whom he was employed, in his attempt to secure the obedience of these large scholars upon some honorable and manly principles, and in his long-suffering forbearance with them. And, as the school had so nearly reached its close, they fully approve also of his resorting at last to suspension rather than to flogging. The scholars could not complain that they were, by this measure, deprived of much of their winter's schooling. And if they had not improved the privileges they had enjoyed, during a large portion of the winter, it was their own fault. Notwithstanding this disturbance, Mr. Putnam's school appeared very well at the closing examination, indicating by its appearance faithfulness on the part of the teacher, and diligence on the part of the pupils, with the exception of those noticed.

The propriety of employing female teachers in our district schools, during the winter season, has been seriously questioned by some, and much urged by others. It is a question to be determined rather by experiment than discussion. It is important therefore to record the result of every experiment that is made. In three of our schools has this experiment been tried during the past winter, in the North, South, and West schools. In the first two of these the experiment has been entirely successful, and in the third nearly so. In the North school there has been manifested, on the part of the pupils, a delicate and respectful regard for the teacher's wishes and feelings, and a cheerful, ready obedience to the rules and orders of the school. There are not, in this school, at the present time, as many large scholars and advanced studies as there are in some other schools in town, nor as there have been in this, in some past years.

But in no school have the studies pursued been more thoroughly taught in their elementary principles than in this. In the South school there have been large scholars and advanced studies. There have been among the pupils young gentlemen and young ladies, entitled to these appellations not only from age and stature, but from conduct and character. Here too, as in the North school, there has been manifested, on the part of the pupils, an affectionate regard for the wishes of the teacher, a spirit of prompt obedience, and a teachable disposition. In no school in town have the branches of English grammar and the higher Mathematics, been more thoroughly taught than in this. In this school a plan was adopted for the purpose of preventing, if possible, the dread of English composition usually felt. A paper was started, containing contributions from the pupils. This plan, by affording an opportunity for the exercise of the playful and sportive feelings of youth, accomplished, in some degree, its purpose. And the committee were happy to learn that the young gentlemen of the school, as well as the young ladies, contributed to its columns. As an indication of the state of feeling existing between the teacher and pupils in this school, it is worthy of being stated that the pupils, having been disappointed in regard to an anticipated sleigh-ride for which they had made arrangements, appropriated, of their own accord, the money that was to have been so expended to the purchase of a present for their teacher, as a token of their affectionate regard for her. The experiment then of employing a female teacher for the winter schools has in the North and South districts been in all respects successful.

In the West school there have been, as already stated, some violations of order. Some others not guilty of violations of order of sufficient importance to require the special attention of the committee, were not as obedient and as at-

tentive to their studies as they ought to have been. Such pupils absented themselves from the closing examination. Those who were present on that occasion did both their teacher and themselves great credit. The committee are fully of the opinion that any apparent want of perfect success in this school, cannot be attributed to any want of capacity, faithfulness or tact on the part of the teacher, of whose qualifications they were led to form a very high opinion, but from want of co-operation on the part of the pupils. The inhabitants of the West District have done one thing, during the past winter, which is worthy of being imitated by the inhabitants of every other district in the town. They have contributed some six or eight dollars for the purpose of increasing their school library, by the purchase of new books. A few dollars, each year, in each district, expended in this way will be the means of opening, from year to year, new sources of information and interest to the pupils that may attend. This record of the result of the employment of female teachers during the winter season, as far as the experiment has been tried during the past winter in our schools, the committee have felt themselves in duty bound to make.

Your committee have felt somewhat anxious in regard to the moral influence of our schools, and have feared that the requisitions of the law bearing upon this point have not been as fully heeded, as those which relate to intellectual culture. In the Revised Statutes we learn that it is made by legal enactment "the duty of all instructors of youth to exert their best endeavours to impress on the minds of children and youth, committed to their care and instruction, the principles of piety, justice, and a sacred regard to truth; love to their country, humanity and universal benevolence; sobriety, industry, and frugality; chastity, moderation, and temperance; and those other virtues, which are the ornament of

human society, and the basis on which a republican government is founded." In accordance with the spirit of this requisition, your committee have, at the closing examinations of the schools, in some instances, not in all, inquired of the teachers, in the presence of the pupils and of their parents and friends who might be present, in regard to the moral conduct of the pupils ; and have asked particularly whether any were in the practice of using profane language, of uttering as true what was untrue, of manifesting and thereby cherishing an unkind and quarrelsome disposition among themselves. And, in their addresses to the schools, your committee have endeavored to direct the thoughts of the pupils to God, his character, providence and government ; to their own dependence, obligations and duty. While none of the teachers have been entirely indifferent to the moral characters and improvement of their pupils, some have sought, with much earnestness, to do their whole duty in this respect. The teacher of the grammar school, in the Centre District, during the summer, in addition to unusual diligence and faithfulness in her efforts for the intellectual improvement of her pupils, manifested a deep interest in their moral welfare. She employed a few moments, almost every day, in free, conversational lectures, addressed to the whole school, upon some topic of moral conduct. An influence for good was evidently exerted upon some of the scholars by this teacher. Other teachers adopted different methods for the accomplishment of the same objects. Your committee are not prepared to express an opinion as to the best method of cultivating the moral improvement of our children in our public schools, but they would express the earnest hope that the subject itself, the importance of moral culture, may receive increased attention at the hands of parents, school-committees, and teachers.

It is made by law the duty of the Superintending School

Committee, not only to report the state of the schools, but also to offer such hints, as their observation may have suggested, for the future improvement of these schools. In accordance with this requisition, your committee would frankly state that our schools are, on the whole, in a prosperous condition, yet that they are not, at this time, what they might and ought to be made. They do not accomplish all that they might and ought to accomplish. In these schools, it must be remembered, that most of our children will receive all the direct instruction they will ever enjoy. Ought not the instruction, then, given in our public schools, to be sufficiently thorough and sufficiently extensive to qualify all, who go through the course there taught, for all the ordinary duties to which they may be called in after life ? They do not at present give instruction thus thorough and extensive. Is it not often the case that our daughters leave our public schools, after having passed through all that is there taught, without being qualified, by their readiness in figures and their acquaintance with simple Book Keeping and accounts, for business transactions which may in after life devolve upon them ? And is it not too often true that both our sons and daughters leave school, without being qualified to write letters of either business or friendship, free from mistakes in orthography, punctuation, grammatical construction, and the placing of capitals ? And are these attainments, which it is too much to expect from our public schools ? Your committee think not. They are of opinion that as high attainments as these, at least, should be aimed at ; and that, if steadily and perseveringly aimed at by committees, parents, and teachers, they may be reached.

The first suggestion your committee would offer for the future improvement of our schools, relates to the importance of thorough instruction in the elements of the various stu-

dies pursued. It is painful to find scholars pursuing some of the higher branches of study, or attempting to pursue them, while deficient in the more common departments of reading and spelling. An expression has sometimes reached the ears of the committee, bearing upon this point, which they deem both erroneous and injurious. It is said that it matters but little what the character of the instruction may be, which is given in our primary schools, and to our younger pupils; that if small children can be kept contented and happy in school, it is all that ought to be asked.

Your committee are far from urging that children should be sent at an early age to school, or that these little ones should, when at school, be kept for any length of time to the same positions and studies, or that there should be an attempt on the part of instructors, to teach these smaller scholars a great amount of knowledge. They would only urge that whatever is taught, how small soever the amount may be, should be taught thoroughly. Your committee would state distinctly, that they have no complaint to make in regard to the teachers of our primary schools during the past year. They have all laboured diligently and conscientiously, and have accomplished much for their respective schools. But they would suggest that the instruction in these schools, and with all our younger pupils, should be made more thorough than it ever yet has been. Reading and Spelling are the principal branches taught in these schools, the branches first taught to our younger scholars in all our schools.

A correct knowledge of the orthography of our language, depending as it does upon mere arbitrary memory, can be more easily acquired at this early period than afterwards. And, if not secured thus early, there is great danger that it never will be. But, if a knowledge of the proper mode of spelling words, of the proper manner of dividing them into

the syllables of which they are composed, and of the correct pronunciation of the separate syllables be made so familiar to the child, that he can call any new word he may meet almost at a glance, a foundation will be laid for a free, correct, and easy style of reading. We sometimes complain that our lads, of a dozen years of age, do not express, with life and force, the spirit and sentiment of the piece they read. The reason of this often is, that they are not attempting to do so. The exercise of reading with such pupils, in consequence of previous superficial and inaccurate instruction, is merely a blundering attempt to pronounce a succession of words, not familiar to the eye, the syllabication of which, with the proper pronunciation of the separate syllables, is almost entirely unknown, in a correct and proper manner. The evil influence of a want of thoroughness in the elementary principles of the different branches, is lasting in its effects. And the more specially is it so, because habits of carelessness are of all habits the most difficult to be overcome. It may be thought, perhaps, that suggestions like these are out of place in a report like this, and should be reserved for the ear of the teacher, at the commencement of the school. But parents sometimes indulge or cherish in their children feelings and desires which prove a great hindrance to the attainment of this thoroughness and accuracy, even when teachers are desirous of securing it. They wish to have their children crowded forward into the higher schools, and higher branches of study, even to the neglect of thoroughness and accuracy in the elementary principles. Your committee would therefore most earnestly urge the importance of a steady aim, on the part of future committees, parents, and teachers, at greater accuracy and thoroughness, in the elementary principles of the different branches of study taught in our schools.

As one of the means of securing this most desirable end,

your committee would suggest the importance of avoiding frequent changes of teachers. Much of the time of the pupils is lost, and habits of carelessness are engendered by these frequent changes. In the South-East, the South, and the North schools, where the same teachers have been continued in charge of their schools through the year, the beneficial effects were evident. Indeed it is surprising that the community have, so long, either overlooked, or borne with, the evils resulting from a frequent change of teachers. If we reflect but for a moment upon the subject, we shall perceive that they are very great. A teacher is employed for three months, or perhaps for even a shorter time. During this short time, he is to make himself acquainted with his pupils, of whom he has known nothing before, in regard to their capacities, their temperaments, their dispositions, and their respective stages of progress; and then he is to carry them forward as far as possible in their studies. And while he is thus seeking an acquaintance with his pupils, he is also bringing them into a familiarity with his own modes of instruction and government. And when he leaves, another takes his place, and goes through the same process. Suppose that our merchants were under the necessity of changing their clerks and book-keepers once in three months? Should we not hear the complaint, that each incumbent had only time to become qualified for the successful performance of his duties, before he left his place. Indeed, do we not often hear most bitter complaints, from our housewives, if compelled to change their *help* as often as once in three months? And is the education of our children, affecting as it does the tender mind, the susceptible heart, the living spirit, of less importance than the merchant's books, or the matron's household arrangements? Does it require less skilful treatment, or less time to become acquainted with the work and the material to

be wrought upon? Changes will occur, full often enough, notwithstanding our utmost care to prevent them. Your committee would therefore suggest that frequent changes of teachers should be avoided, whenever they possibly can. If a devoted, thorough and successful teacher has been secured, avoid if possible a change. If it is necessary to employ a male in the winter and a female in the summer, it would be better, if possible, to employ the same teachers in alternation for several successive seasons, that so they may understand each other's views, strengthen each other's hands, and lend their united influence to the accomplishment of the same great end, thoroughness and accuracy in all the branches taught.

As another means of securing the same end, and one, which seems to be especially important, in consequence of the frequent changes, which now occur, both among the teachers, and the members of the Superintending School Committee, your committee would suggest that the Prudential Committee-man, in each school district, purchase a blank book for the use of the school of which he has the supervision, in which each teacher shall be required to record, at the close of his or her school, the different classes in the several studies which have been pursued, with the name of each scholar in each class, accompanied by a statement, in regard to each class, of the amount passed over in the study specified. As for example, it may be stated, at the close of any particular term, that such a class, composed of such and such scholars, have been carried to such a point of progress in the particular study specified; if the study be Arithmetic, say to or through Fractions, as the case may be. This book shall be open to the inspection of the committee, at their several visits, and especially at the closing examinations. It shall be left at the close of each school term, with the Pru-

dential Committee-man of the district, to be by him handed, at the commencement of a new term, to the teacher who may next succeed. The advantages, which it is hoped may result from the adoption of this suggestion, are several. Each teacher, who is called upon to record the precise point to which the several classes have been carried by him or her, in their respective studies, for the inspection of the committee and of succeeding teachers, will be anxious to have the work which is labelled with his or her name, as having been professedly done by him or her, well and thoroughly done. Then too, a succeeding teacher will be prevented by such a record from wasting the time of the pupils, by carrying them over studies with which they are already familiar. It is true that a succeeding teacher may find classes, which are not, in his or her opinion, thoroughly acquainted with the studies recorded against their names, or it may appear that, in the interval between the schools, they have forgotten what they had previously learned. And it may therefore be deemed important that the classes, some or all of them, should spend some time in reviewing. But the teacher, who deems it his duty to make the classes review, may state in the record, which he leaves, the fact that he has done so, and the reason why he has thought it necessary. Still further, such a record may exert a healthful influence upon the scholars, prompting them to faithful endeavours to show themselves thoroughly familiar with the studies which they are recorded to have passed over. And finally such a record will be of great assistance to the Superintending School Committee, especially when new members are placed upon the Board, as is frequently the case, who have not previously been acquainted with the characters of the several schools, and the points of progress which the several classes in them may have reached.

The expense of carrying out this suggestion, of purchasing such a book, will be but trifling, and the committee are of opinion that the benefits to our schools, resulting from its adoption, may be very great.

Our schools can never become all that they might be, and ought to be, unless the attendance of the pupils is more regular, punctual, and constant than it now is. There seems to be, with many, a very strange state of feeling upon this subject. They are anxious to have the school in their district kept open as many weeks as possible during the year. But, at the same time, they are not careful to have their own children attend regularly upon all the sessions and exercises of the school, while it does continue. From one of our school Registers it appears that, out of one hundred and ten days, during which a certain child was connected with the school, fifty-three days of absence are marked against that child's name. Nearly one half of the school term was lost to that child. The parents of that child would have thought it very strange had there not been money enough granted to continue the school more than half the usual length of time; we should probably have heard, from the lips of those very parents, bitter complaints of the very limited school privileges which their children enjoyed. And yet, by their own carelessness or negligence, perhaps, they have themselves cut short the schooling of their own child, to one half what it might have been. It is even worse than this. For fifty-three days of schooling, where the child attends regularly day after day, and all things are in readiness for the work of the school, will be of far more value than seventy days' attendance, scattered, by the frequent absence of the pupil, over a term of one hundred and ten days' duration. Your committee would express the earnest hope that parents will think more of this matter, and will strive to have their children attend school

more regularly and constantly than has heretofore been the case. To secure this, there should be a free consultation among the inhabitants of each district, in order to have their schools open at such times as will best accommodate the largest number of those pupils who most need the advantages of the school. And, when the school is opened, sacrifices should be made on the part of the parents, in order to have their children always present. And then too, in order to secure more regular and punctual attendance, it would be well for parents to make their arrangements to have the amusements of their children, such as the exercises of the dancing school and frequent social evening parties of children occur in the intervals between the schools, rather than during the time of the school. The intervals, in the spring and in the fall, will afford sufficient time for these amusements, and time too, nearly, if not quite, as well adapted to them as any other portion of the year. And no one, who has not, in the capacity of a teacher been sorely tried in this way, can tell how entirely such amusements break up a school, destroy all interest in its exercises, and cause the money, expended for its support, to be almost wholly wasted. If some such arrangement, as that now suggested, could be made, the result would be that the enjoyment of these amusements would be secured, while the school, free from interruptions of this character, would be left to exert its best influences for the good of the rising generation.

Still further, in order to make our schools all that they are capable of becoming, it is important that parents should cordially coöperate with the teachers. And especially is it important, that they should endeavour to impress upon the minds of their children a due sense of the importance of the privileges, which they enjoy; of the objects they should have in view in attending school, and also

of the importance of ever cherishing and manifesting, while in school, a spirit of obedience, a teachable disposition, and a desire for improvement. Some of the larger boys, in one of our schools, during the past winter, have wasted the most of their time and opportunities, and deprived themselves of the beneficial results, which they might otherwise have secured. And to what has this been owing? Not to the want of time to attend school,—not to the want of a good teacher,—not to any neglect on the part of the teacher to give them their full share of his time and attention:—it has been owing to the fact that they attended school with wrong feelings and dispositions. Parents then may do much to encourage and assist the teacher, and secure the best success of the school, by training their children at home to habits of prompt and cheerful obedience, by cherishing in their hearts feelings of affectionate regard for their teacher, and by impressing upon their minds a deep sense of the importance of improving aright the privileges they enjoy.

Your Committee would suggest to those, who may be their successors in office, that it has occurred to them during the past year, that the improvement of our schools would be more rapidly promoted, if the several teachers of our schools could be induced to unite with the Superintending and Prudential Committees and other friends of education in town, in an educational association, for the purpose of holding occasional meetings, for free conversation upon such topics of school discipline and instruction as would naturally come before them. And your committee would also suggest, that the different districts in town would be gainers in the end, if their respective teachers should be encouraged in an occasional absence from school, for the purpose of visiting other schools and learning the modes of procedure adopted by other teachers. These absences,

it is true, should not be very frequent, but occasionally they may be very beneficial.

Your committee have been occasionally troubled by not receiving notice from the Prudential Committee-men of the time of opening and closing the several schools, in sufficient season to enable them easily to plan their private business or alter previous arrangements so as to attend the examinations. For the comfort of those who may be their successors in office, they would state, that it is made by law one of the duties of prudential committees "to give the superintending committee *due* notice of the time when the school will begin and when it will close, so that they may visit it according to law." And they would express the hope that the Prudential Committee men, in our several districts, will consider that every member of the Superintending Committee has his own private business to attend to, and all his various social arrangements to meet, in addition to the duties incumbent upon him as a member of the school committee, and will regard the due notice, which they are required by law to give, as embracing, at least, one week, from the time the notice is given, to the day when the school is to open or close.

In respectfully submitting this Report of the state of our schools during the past year, accompanied by hints for their future improvement, the official labours of your committee will close. They cannot retire from the responsible office which has been committed to their charge, without expressing their deep sense of the vast importance of the interests involved in the prosperity and success of our common schools. No behest can be left to our children, which shall equal in value the education of head, heart, and conscience, which these schools are intended to give.